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Changing work practices and new positional dynamics at the Integrated Emergency Department

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Stream 20: professional work in the Nordic welfare states.

Abstract for NWLC 2014. Paper title: **Changing work practices and new positional dynamics at the Integrated Emergency Department.**

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In Denmark the local government reform of 2007 which, among others, had a more efficient use of resources and a higher level of quality in the health sector as core objectives lead to the establishment of larger and specialized hospital units. The restructuring of the hospital sector involves new ways of admitting acute patients in integrated emergency departments (IED hereafter). This reflects a marked paradigmatic shift characterized by the specialization of hospital units, and the standardization and systematization of work practices. The aim of this paper is to analyze how the nurses of a recently established IED respond to and act upon attempts at standardization of practices substantiated and legitimized through arguments of quality and safety enhancements based on medical evidence. The paper addresses the issue of professional practice and identity among the nursing staff. Through a Bourdieuan lens I explore how New Public Management remedies in the form of standardization of care and clinical service allow for new professional capital to emerge on the one hand, and on the other limit traditional nursing craft thereby creating new dynamics in the field.